

**Present:** Andy Bennett; Hans Brandal; John Coney; Dick Burkhardt, Chair; Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott, Vice-Chair; John Jensen; Holly Plackett; Anirudh Sahni; Mike Taylor

**Excused:** Sandy Paul-Lyle; Joan Sells

**Absent:** Dwight Baker

**Staff:** Barbara de Michele, Community Relations Planner; Sharon Slebodnick, Supervisor of Transit Route Facilities

Dick Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **Bus Shelters**

Sleboadnick explained that Metro has approximately 9,500 bus stops. Of those, 1500 have bus shelters (about 300 have more than one shelter in place). Bus shelter sites are selected based primarily on passenger volumes. In the late 70's, Metro adopted a policy that says new bus shelters would be located at bus stops with 25 passenger boardings in the suburbs and 50 passenger boardings in Seattle. Exceptions to the policy are made for bus stops near employment centers, medical facilities and schools. This policy was written prior to Metro's obtaining the automatic boarding count data machines. The vast majority of bus shelters are located within the City of Seattle.

The initial cost of an individual shelter is between \$20,000 and \$50,000 (these prices include everything, including the costs of purchasing right of way, permitting, and planning). A shelter generally lasts 21 years. Every seven years, shelters are refurbished at the average cost of \$3,800 per unit. Maintenance costs run approximately \$1,300 per year per unit, and include daily or weekly power cleaning, garbage removal, graffiti removal, as well as bush and vegetation removal. Metro has taken measures to reduce bus stop vandalism, including etched glass panels, removal of sides and backs, and removal of seats.

Metro must comply with all local requirements in order to obtain permits for siting bus shelters. Requirements vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction (39 cities and unincorporated King County itself). It takes between six and 18 months to obtain necessary permits. In addition, Metro has started lighting its shelters. The lights are powered by solar batteries, and include lighting inside and outside the shelters. Metro must negotiate permits with local jurisdictions and utilities for additional lighting, and these are often granted on 4-year cycles that must be renewed and re-negotiated.

Metro has a backlog of 475 stops eligible for shelters but without them. Each year, the King County Council authorizes funding for 50 or 60 new shelters, 100 ADA improvements and 100 stand-alone benches. However, approximately 20 shelters are removed each year because of such factors as low passenger boardings, high rates of vandalism or at the request of law enforcement. So Metro actually adds an approximate net of 30 to 40 new shelters each year.



### **Bus Shelter Discussion**

Following Slebodnick's presentation, members of the TAC discussed possible positions on bus shelters. After much discussion, the group agreed there is consensus on the following items:

- encourage the Council to fund lighting at every shelter (great crime deterrent, solar panels keep costs low, pedestrian lighting is very attractive)
- ask the Council to explore bus shelter advertising as a revenue source that could be used to increase the number of shelters (one caveat: revenues need to be DEDICATED to shelters, both capital costs and maintenance/operations costs).
- ask the Council to explore transportation benefit districts as a revenue source that could be used to increase the number of shelters (this comes from a bill authorized by this year's legislature and can help cities or even neighborhoods fund needed improvements; could also be done in partnership with jurisdictions, i.e., cities of Seattle, Redmond, Bellevue, etc)
- ask the Council to set a policy that Metro will make a net gain of 70 additional shelters each year (there are over 400 stops eligible for shelters that do not have them. The net gain each year is far lower than 70 -- our proposal would essentially double the number of shelters being installed each year)
- encourage the Council to update the dual area criteria (i.e., bus shelters are provided to bus stops with 25 passenger boardings in the suburbs and 50 passenger boardings in the city) to reflect both boardings and wait times. (This is one area where the sub-area equity guidelines might be softened. If wait times are taken into account, that should compensate the suburbs and equalize the formula).

Hans Brandal, Holly Plackett and John Coney volunteered to draft a statement for review at the April meeting. The letter of advice will be directed to the Regional Transit Committee. There was additional discussion about writing a letter to the City of Seattle, requesting that they drop their objections to advertising on bus shelters. The group agreed this was a good idea and may use some of the wording from the statement being prepared for the RTC.

### **Vice Chair**

John Coney was elected vice chair. He will serve as chair in July, August and September. Dave Elliott will be the chair for April, May and June.

### **Adjournment**

Burkhart adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:20 p.m.